



# The Florida House of Representatives

Chris Sprowls  
Speaker

## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release:

June 22, 2021

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## Speaker Sprowls: New Laws Restore Civics, Intellectual Freedom

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** *(June 22, 2021)* — Today Florida Speaker Chris Sprowls, R-Palm Harbor, said new Florida laws would return civics and intellectual freedom to Florida schools.

“Today is a new day for Florida schools, where students will be able to learn about the freedom, liberty and democracy which makes America great, where diversity of thought will again reign in our colleges and universities,” said Speaker Sprowls. “I appreciate the support and signature of Governor DeSantis today and the efforts of Senate President Wilton Simpson and our Senate partners to pass legislation that is critically important to the future generations in this state.”

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a package of bills aimed at restoring civics education in K-12 classrooms and encouraging intellectual diversity and freedom of thought in the state’s colleges and universities.

The bills signed today include:

- **House Bill 223**, sponsored by Representative Spencer Roach R-Fort Myers, requires the State Board of Education to conduct annual assessments on intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity at Florida’s institutions of higher learning;
- **House Bill 5**, also known as the “Portraits in Patriotism Act,” sponsored by Representative Ardian Zika, R-Land O’ Lakes, requires the Department of Education to develop or approve integrated civic education for Florida primary and secondary schools and requires the Department to curate oral history resources for the curricula;
- **Senate Bill 1108** requires postsecondary students to take an assessment and courses in civic literacy.

Representative Roach, sponsor of HB 233 said, “It is critical that our colleges and universities are politically neutral but passionately patriotic in the education of our children. Our students deserve to be

challenged, provided facts, and given the freedom to make decisions for themselves.”

Representative Zika, sponsor of HB 5 added, “As an American who began my journey as an immigrant, I am a product of America’s exceptionalism. America is an amazing place to live. I am proud my experience and others like mine will be seen by Florida schoolchildren. Thank you Governor DeSantis for signing this important legislation today.”

The bills signed today take effect July 1, 2021.

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